

THE
MONTHLY RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

VOL. X.

NOVEMBER, 1853.

No. 11.

ENTRANCE INTO THE CHURCH.

A SERMON, BY REV. F. D. HUNTINGTON.

ACTS xviii. 8.—“And Crispus believed on the Lord, with all his house.”

THE Christian Faith is shown to us, in the Acts of the Apostles, working out its first simple developments in human society. In that plain picture, we see how this new force, this divine idea, behaved itself in the world of living men, and women, and children; how it acted on them, and laid hold of them; how it took possession of them, and organized them into a peculiar institution, which has lived on ever since,—the Church. Christ's visible presence is withdrawn out of the world at his resurrection; but thenceforth he appears to mankind in the living body of his church, which, holding in its heart and its hand his Spirit and his word, takes the place of his physical form. And now, from this short statement I have just read about one of the first converts, in the earliest record of church history, we catch a glimpse into the practical working of the system. It appears that persons came into the church, not only as separate individuals, but by families. From this, as well as several other passages, we find that when the parents, or heads of households, became Christian believers, so did their children. All were baptized together. So, in one place, we read of “the church which is in the house of Nymphas;” showing that such a group of believers, comprising

parents and their children, might constitute a church of itself.* How much beauty and sanctity there would be in such a spectacle, — a church in each house, — and how mightily the world would gain in Christian order, purity, and power, if it were generally realized, you can readily imagine. It corresponds to the whole sentiment of revelation, in all the stages of its progress. The covenant made with the Patriarch was made with Abraham and *his seed after him*. Throughout the Mosaic period, children were included with their fathers, in all the blessings of the elder Testament. “The promise is unto you *and your children*,” is the constant doctrine through all God’s messages to the Israelites. We are expressly told that under Christ, in the New Testament, the same covenant is renewed, only expanded and deepened. Throughout, the law of descent is carefully respected. The hereditary tie is recognized. Offspring, at birth, are supposed to be bound up in the same bond of Christian privileges and helps, which encircles their believing progenitors. Does our practice, in our modern churches, imply that this is our belief?

From time to time, during the past four or five years, you have heard affirmed and reaffirmed this view of the birth-relation of children born of Christian parents to the church, especially in those bearings of it which relate to the administration of the ordinances, — Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The same idea seems to have been received, with different degrees of clearness, in former periods. It was distinctly declared by many of the early theological teachers, by whom God planted his church in New England; and it has found, more recently, a few earnest advocates; † but hardly anywhere any thing like a real adoption

* Irenæus, of the first age after the apostolic, referring to the administration of Baptism, says, “Christ came to save all persons by himself, who by him are regenerated to God,— infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and elder persons.”

† So far as I am informed, the honor of having clearly reproduced in our day, and among American Protestants, the primitive theory of the relation of baptized children to the church, belongs to Dr. Bushnell. How far his doctrine would accord with the opinions of this discourse as to the practical developments of that idea, and as to other branches of the general subject, I am not at liberty to say. The reader is also referred to the posthumous sermon on the same topic, by Rev. Mr. Judd of Augusta, already noticed and commended for its vigor and unction in our pages. To Mr. Judd’s plan of at once pronouncing all persons, of whatever life, in Christian countries, *church-members*, we should decidedly object. That would be a measure

into practice, so as to present a church formed after its plan. If what I have just said be tenable, then it has these weighty and decisive testimonies, for all Christian minds, in its justification: first, the undeniable usage of the apostolic age, — the purest, because the nearest to the Master; secondly, the explicit sanction of the authority of the New Testament on the matter; and, thirdly, the analogy and agreement of the Old Testament, reaching back to the primitive era, disclosing God's whole design for the saving of the world, as it opens and ripens from Abraham, or Adam rather, to Jesus of Nazareth.

My object, at present, is not only to remind you afresh of the important place held by this great truth in reference to your personal and domestic welfare, but to trace it out into its necessary connections with the whole position and constitution of the church, — inquiring, with you, what the Christian church is; how entrance is got into it; and what are its claims, functions, and privileges. I am moved to this choice of a topic, as by other motives, so especially by the succession and variety of duties which this day happens to devolve upon me, — including the baptism of children of different ages, and of an adult person; the regular service of public worship and preaching; the administration of the Supper; the admission of a new member into the church; the installation of two additional deacons, — officers of our church; and the instruction, or indoctrination, of the young. These various offices, you perceive, cover the whole field of the subject I have announced, and naturally suggest a connected view of its relations, so as to bring its principal bearings into one chain, and under a single comprehensive survey. Of course, I must confine myself, with a scope so wide, to compressed statements merely, leaving trains of argument and illustrations aside. I wish it might be particularly understood, that, so far from dealing with matters that have no application to any but those who are church-members already, I address myself to-day especially to those who have taken no part in any public profession, and do not share in the communion which is the common token and privilege of members.

entirely impotent to secure the desired reform, — as appears by the fact that the church is nowhere more neglected than where the act of communing is most unconditional, — and also intrinsically false, as substituting a nominal yet inevitable membership for one conditioned on decided personal convictions and a religious love.

I. What is the church? On the authority of the New Testament, I say it is the body of persons who believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of men, crucified and risen; and so believe in him as to be personally conscious of a supreme desire to live his spiritual life, to resemble him, and be his true redeemed disciples. This definition takes the whole qualification for church-membership out of the power of sects and external ceremonies, — lodging it in the internal region of the heart, — among the affections and motives, — whence all life makes its way out into speech, profession, and conduct. Its only test, therefore, is spiritual, not formal. The definition also proposes terms that are strict, without being absurd, and reasonable without being lax. It requires that the purpose to be a Christian soul, within and without, shall be supreme over all other purposes, — take precedence in every deliberate choice, and express itself in prayer and in righteousness. Love to God as manifest in Christ, and love to man as God's child, must be the ruling affections in the soul, — whether they have conformed the character perfectly to them, or not. The church is the aggregate of these consecrated souls, aiming and longing, above all things, to live righteously; irrespective of names, of forms, of creeds, of age, of place, except so far as these affect this internal, central consecration to Christ. If there were only "two or three" such persons in the world, they would be a church, and Christ, fulfilling his promise, would be there in the midst of them. In all periods since Christ ascended, this has been the church. It is distinct from all other bodies, — whether scientific, civil, educational, benevolent, moral, or even religious if they are not religious after the way and gospel of Christ. Its boundaries, as it is embodied in actual persons, may be indistinct to man's eye, but they are plain to God's; and the definition is plain. The church is that body of people, in whatever age or nation, of which Christ is literally and spiritually the Head. And any one particular church, here or there, is a smaller collection of such people, and so a branch of the church universal.

II. How, then, does any individual enter into this church, so as to become a member of it, enjoying the privileges, and incurring the responsibilities, of a member? I answer, by either of two modes, and by no third.

1. The first of these is conversion. This is for all those, past

infancy, who have been living any time outside of the church, — that is, without the supreme purpose I have spoken of, without a conscious dedication to holiness, without treating Jesus Christ, in heart and life, as Lord and Master. All such must obviously be regenerated, before they can be *in* or *of* the church. Hitherto they have been living only that natural life, whose ruling motives are mere selfish instincts, — whose appetites and passions were not subjected to conscience, — whose better traits were spontaneous and irregular, not having taken on the character of principle, — and whose external proprieties were the result only of some form of worldly interest or policy. In all such persons, — comprising how many, even in our nominally Christian community, — there must be a new birth of Christian conviction. There must be a sincere penitence for this sinful habit, which has disobeyed and denied God's commandment. There must be a holy heart, with prayer in it, created by regeneration and washing of the Holy Spirit. There must be a turning about from the old false direction which led away from Christ, to the opposite which sets the face towards him. Whether slow or swift, — and it certainly cannot be too swift nor too early, and the earlier the easier, — this conversion is indispensable. We see many instances of it in the New Testament. In those early times, it commonly involved a change of the mind as well as of the heart; — that is, a Pagan or a Jew must change the whole opinion of his head respecting religion, as well as the love and motive in his heart. His nominal and intellectual belief must undergo a revolution. Accordingly, to describe this transfer from one scheme to another, we find the terms, "conversion," and "believing on the Lord Jesus Christ," used in the New Testament synonymously and interchangeably. Now there may be cases among us, of the same radical and mental change, as with all heathens, Jews, Mahometans, or proper infidels. But otherwise, and where, as with most of us, there is no mental dissent from the evidences and truths of Christianity, the conversion wanted is only that of the heart, giving that up to Christ. Then the individual can clearly say, — I have resolved, God's grace helping, to be a Christian disciple. And whenever that is really done, the soul truly becomes invisibly united to Christ, and so, of course, is virtually a member of his body or church.

2. The other way of coming into Christ's church is by being born into it. And all those, I maintain, are born into it, who

are born of believing parents, or parents who are members in it, whether they became so by *their* birth in turn, or by the experience of spiritual regeneration. By this I mean that all children so born are to be received into the arms of their parents, and treated, as the sacred property of the church. The church lays claim to them, from the very outset, as her own. Properly trained up, by spiritual teaching and example, under the blessing of the Spirit, they are never to know of a time when they were not included in God's covenant of promise. Instead of being cast out, as little aliens, to run wild a while in the world, having no part nor lot in the blessed Christian shelter and inheritance, they are to be always folded inside that security. The church is to come forward, in the person of those parents who are its members, — the divinely and naturally appointed guardians of these young souls; and thus press them to its own gracious bosom, and feed them on its own heavenly truth; until such time as they are old enough, by their own conscious and personal responsible act, to confirm the covenant which their parents and the church made for them in their infancy, by openly espousing the membership. For I do not overlook the dreadful possibility, that in the stress of temptation, and a depraved inclination, the child, even when all this has been done for him, may wander off and be a prodigal. He may viciously disown the covenant made in his behalf. He may plunge into sin, in despite of all. Then his only way back into the church of Christ must be by conversion, as with the children of unbelievers. All I say is that such instances ought to be prevented or diminished by wiser and more Christian notions and practices. Let the Christian parents continually speak to the young child of his church privileges, of the joy and the duty of his Christian heritage and home. Let that child have the doctrines and life of Christ faithfully instilled into his soul, by domestic instruction and family prayer. Let him be reminded of his baptismal dedication, and taught to live worthily of it. I do not suppose any magical, talismanic effect is thus to be wrought upon him, but a perfectly natural and simple one, standing in harmony with all other educational influences, and guaranteed also a peculiar blessing. This Christian child, like others, must have a spiritual nature and life formed upon him, in addition to his natural life. Only, this blessed boon of a new and holy heart steals in upon him gradually, by way of his parents'

eyes and voice and prayers, from the very dawn of his consciousness, grows with his growth, hardens with his muscles, expands with his understanding, and matures in him as gently and regularly as any of the growths of the forest or the field; so that there shall be no period in his remembrance, when he was not moving straight on towards a ripe Christian character, and full communion in the church. All this I place in contrast with our strange and savage habit of turning off our little ones to feed on the husks and chaff of the senses, till some dreadful wrench of sorrow, after they have grown up, possibly wakens a few of them to conviction, and drives them back, broken-spirited, from the far country where they had wandered, to their Father's house.

III. This brings me on, as the next step, to the place and the meaning of Baptism. The value of that ordinance is sufficiently attested throughout the New Testament. Christ himself, notwithstanding his divine elevation, submitted himself to it that he might fulfil all righteousness. So early as his conversation with Nicodemus, while he was announcing the grand principles of his new kingdom, he spoke of the new birth as requiring both the Spirit and water. He enjoined its universal observance, through the church of all nations, in his last charge to his disciples. By studying the design of it in other parts of the New Testament, we can come to only one understanding of its object. Everywhere it signified the entrance of the subject of it into the church of Christ. It was the outward sign of that single fact,—the beginning of the Christian life. It was applied to adults and children indiscriminately; for we read of whole households baptized. Whenever any person was converted, that is, became a true believer in Christ, young or old, he was baptized; and that was the only ceremony of admission into the church. After baptism, he communed, as a matter of course. According to the convenience of climate, and the usage of the oriental nations, this baptism was doubtless by the immersion of the whole body. But, obviously enough, what the Spirit sought, as a means of outward order and general benefit, was simply the outward application of water, and not the quantity of it.

With what understanding, then, may a Christian minister administer the rite of baptism now? I answer, it must be according to one of the three following modes:—

1. Baptism may be applied, according to the whole scriptural

doctrine I have been opening, to the children of believers in communion with Christ's church. In that case, the ordinance is the outward sign and seal that the children, who receive it, follow the organic law of their parents, and belong to the church. The church comes forward, and stretches out her arms, with holy sprinkling, to claim and bless the new-born immortal. The parents engage, for the offspring, the blessings of the same covenant that covers themselves. Parental love, if it is Christian, cannot do less. To refuse would really be worse than the unnaturalness of disowning them: for, in the latter case, they are only turned out of the earthly home; in the former, out of God's spiritual home, and denied the saving nurture of the Christian family. Baptism is here put, where the New Testament puts it, at the beginning of the Christian life. For, as the adult convert begins that life at his conversion, so the child of believers is supposed to begin it at his birth. This kind of baptism is so clearly the right kind, that we must long for the time when there shall be no occasion for any other.

2. Baptism may be applied to persons who have advanced some way into their natural life, not baptized in their childhood, and now resolved to be of Christ's church, because they are regenerated, or Christian-minded. Here, exactly as before, the rite marks the beginning of the Christian life: only that beginning lies at a later point in the person's history. Here the act is a self-dedication, — the individual who comes into the church thus doing for himself what no Christian parent did for him. So far, all is consistent and obvious.

3. But there is a third class. Parents who have never manifested a desire to be of Christ's church themselves, nor openly avowed discipleship, seek to have their children baptized. When this request is granted, if the foregoing positions are sound, it must be on one of two understandings: either that these parents, though not avowedly church-members, are so earnestly possessed of the spirit of Christian piety and of all Christian purposes, that they are approved believers in the sight of the Great Head of the church, and so members of the church invisible, — which would always be the supposition most grateful to entertain; or else, where this presumption is inevitably excluded, the ceremony must be another thing, — an act of pious intention, a consecration, perhaps, not without salutary impressions, springing from a

thoughtful parental regard, but not the sign of induction into Christ's body. Let this question be remembered, however: Are not parents, not being church communicants themselves, who provide baptism for their children, bound to consider very deeply whether consistency does not require them to observe, in behalf of their own souls, the same veneration for ordinances that they profess in behalf of their progeny? And how can they expect these to obey God, and belong to Christ, if they themselves do not go before in the appointed way?

IV. This brings us on to consider the place and signification of communion at the Lord's Supper. By all that has gone before, that service is not what *makes* any of us members in the church, but it is both a privilege and a duty consequent upon such membership. The true formula would be, not, "I commune, therefore I am a church-member," but "I am a church-member, therefore I commune." What gives any of you a title to participate at the Supper is Christian Baptism, because, as I have said, Baptism is the sign of the beginning of the Christian life, whether administered in infancy in the parental covenant, or afterwards, on conviction and spiritual renewing. It follows, therefore, that all baptized persons are privileged to be candidates for full communion in the church, whenever they will personally present their claim.

At the same time, they must personally present it. It is an act wholly within their own choice and responsibility. Such choosing is wholesome, and, for a free agent, quite necessary. A moral act done for a child cannot force or bind his liberty when he grows up. The baptismal covenant only throws about him its gracious influences, pledges the Eternal Help in his behalf, and welcomes him into the Saviour's organized body. But he must be free to go out if he will. This view makes his alienation his own act, and casts the terrible accountability therefor on his rebellious violence, which tears him away from his home. His home, and his belongings, are within his Father's house. On the other hand, if he will, as soon as he is old enough to understand and weigh the matter for himself, come straight forward to the Master's table, he thereby recognizes, confirms, ratifies, for himself,—in fact, makes his own act,—what his Christian parents did for him. His voluntary communing is, then, precisely what some Christians call it, a confirmation.

If we had a definite and orderly system among us, as one must heartily wish on every account we had, then I suppose a plan something like this might be found at once perfectly simple and practicable, and also full of most effective and glorious fruits. In every parish, by every minister, let there be kept a record of all children baptized into the church. Each year, at a stated and convenient time, let the minister call together, as a matter of course, but by personal and direct invitation, all such young persons, so baptized, as have, within the year preceding, reached a certain suitable age, — suppose fifteen years. Let him bring them under a brief course of friendly and religious instruction, in addition to any Sunday-school or domestic teaching, so faithfully reminding them of the parental covenant and other obligations, and renewing in this form the demand of Christ and the church, that they come into the fold, and stand pledged for their Divine Master; and, if proper dispositions exist, at the end of such tuition, admitting them. At the same time, let him offer corresponding instruction to all unbaptized children; striving thus for their conversion, or spiritual renewing, their baptism into the church, and their admission to the Supper. When any family pass from one parish to another, let them procure from the one they leave to the one they join, a letter, signifying not only the communicants among them, but the names and ages of the baptized children, that they may be properly taken up and nurtured in their new religious home. Who can tell what noble and vital accessions of holiness and strength the church might gain, in such an ordering of her internal economy? What spectacle can be conceived more full of moral beauty and promise, than ranks of the young, thus early, and while they need the hallowed securities of faith most urgently, pressing straight forward into the gates of the kingdom; this, instead of what we now too often see, the shame of our Christendom, and the sorrow of all devout hearts; viz. crowds of bewildered and neglected youths, plunging fearfully away, unguarded, into the perils and vices of the world, broken hearts, and ruined hopes, and characters lost, lost beyond recall?

It is possible that some of my hearers may not have been apprised of the reasons for the custom that obtains in this church, of inviting, at our communion seasons, all persons desiring to be disciples of Christ promiscuously, to partake of the Supper, and

yet of receiving regular members into our church by a special, though very simple, form of admission. The reasons, briefly stated, are these: Whenever this table is spread, it is the Saviour's, and not man's. It is the minister's office only to throw it open, fearlessly and affectionately, to all persons within the sound of his voice, who, on their own personal responsibility, whether by baptism or conversion, choose to regard themselves as Christ's followers, and desire to testify their allegiance, and honor him, at the time, in this way. The New Testament shows us no other rule.

At the same time, while such a state of the heart may constitute you a member of Christ's invisible and universal church, it does not constitute you a member of *this particular local organization*. In order to bring you into that, there is a simple form of personal confession, such as we believe best adapted to secure the ends of an organized and orderly church existence. Experience shows, that there is in most healthy-minded persons a preference for coming in by such a door. It defines relations, and qualifies for business measures and social action. It is an open, satisfactory step. If it involves a trial of feeling, it is no less acceptable, for that cross, to Him who bore the cross of an infinitely heavier sacrifice for us. So that while we hope joining our particular church is also entering into the church universal, membership in the church universal does not supersede the occasion for special confirmation, or confession, on the part of those who wish to belong to this church in particular.

If any are still disposed to inquire *why* they should commune at the Lord's Supper, a complete answer could be given only in much greater space than is now at my command. Let these simple reasons enter into your reflections, and not be dismissed till they are pondered fairly: 1. Because God, the Maker of our frame, has so shaped and colored the whole structure of our being, that there is an exact adaptation between spiritual life and progress, and this memorial ordinance. So much is settled, by the authority of his own word, and by the vastly accumulating testimony of the millions of believers, in all the lengthening generations of the church. The soul and the Supper of communion meet one another, and are meant for one another. 2. Jesus himself, the tenderest friend, the dying Saviour, the spotless sacrifice "for us the unjust," the divine and gentle Lord, has enjoined it, under

the most impressive conditions, on all his followers that truly love him, — reason enough, to human feeling, if every other failed. 3. There is a personal satisfaction resulting from it, — a satisfaction, not realized, of course, to those that have never come where it is tasted, but very real and unspeakably precious to those that have. 4. It is a testimony to the Divine cause, to God's law, and Christ's kingdom in the world; and when the two opposing forces, righteousness and sin, God and mammon, are drawn up in as sharp and bitter a warfare as they are everywhere about us yet, it is cowardly and slothful for us not to take open ground, on the Lord's side, or on Satan's. 5th, and finally, it is a means, almost unsurpassed, of encouraging and multiplying holiness, — all the virtues, principles, graces, charities, that elevate society, redeem from wrong, brighten, bless, and sanctify the world. The Supper, for all who partake of it, with right preparation, in a right spirit, is a mighty quickener of goodness, a mighty guard against temptation. My friend, whoever you are, is your path so clear of danger, and your soul so strong in its own strength, that you can afford to scorn the heavenly help?

I know the current objections, — as that you are not good enough. Judged by positive attainments, no man nor woman is good enough, nor pretends to be. Profession, in that case, would be arrogant and offensive presumption. But, if I understand the conditions of the gospel, they are sincere penitence for sin, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a ruling desire to lead a holy life, sustained by prayer. Here is no impracticable demand, — only a heart of love and trust and pure aspiration. If you have that, you are good enough to commune with Christ, and thus to grow better; and, if you have it not, you are not fit either to live or to die.

As to its being a form: that is the made-up objection of only a few fastidious and sentimental persons, who are not thoroughly in earnest about the matter. It is a species of cant, that reappears from time to time, but never has much force. Instead of any special spirituality, the objectors to forms are commonly those that have too little spiritual life to put life into the forms God has kindly provided as a lodge for the Spirit, and so faint under them, or stumble at them, and find them meaningless instead of vitalizing them. The only real test of fitness for communion is a cordial, deep, deliberate desire, or want, or sense of need, of the

communion. "Whosoever" so desires, and "will, let him come, and take of the" bread and the "water of life freely."

Here, then, our course of thought is finished. The whole doctrine is practical and personal. To those who are not believers, it says, "Believe, be converted, turn ye, repent, cast off indifference and sin, for your own sake and your children's." To Christian parents in church-communion, it says, "Bring in your children, by baptism, into the dear Redeemer's covenant and fold, and train them up for immortal life." To the young it says, "Come, early, *before* ye are weary and heavy-laden, and have the joy, the peace, the strength, of faith and righteousness."

To all it offers the honors of the church, the order of a reconciled society, the beauty of holiness, and the triumphant hope of heaven.

HYMN OF THE SEASONS.

THE early violets springing from the sod,
The saxifrage that blooms beside the rock,
The softly swelling lawn, besprinkled o'er
With falling flowers of maple and of elm,
And watered by the gently flowing brook,
Beside whose edge the golden caltha lifts
Its cheerful face; anemones,
Bloodroot, and adder's-tongue; — these, each and all,
With one accord, reveal one boundless love,
And show to man the glorious name of God.

The hum of early waking bees; the note
Of sparrows, gossiping with merry tongue;
The cheerful sunset song of thrush; misnamed,
Yet honoring the robin's name he bears;
The piping frog's good-night; the toad's long trill; —
These all blend sweetly in the chord of hope,
That fills the soul with longing and with tears,
And leads our thoughts to childhood; springtime sweet
Of life, — when God dwelt in our unstained hearts.

In June, on yonder wooded hill, go sit
Beneath the leafy trees; where, overhead,
The brown thrush, playful, taunts the farmer's toil;
Or catbird sings his ever-varied lay;
While from the elm, amid the neighboring mead,
The oriole his clear bold whistle sounds;
And from the mead itself the bobolink pours
His liquid prelude, and his saucy song.
In all this flood of melody, one sound
Will ever fill thine ear, — the name of God.

Around thy seat the flowers of June will rise,
To fill thine eye with tokens of the Hand
That formed these merry songsters of the air.
The winter-loving herb, pipsisseva,
Adorns the Summer with a flower so neat,
So exquisite in form and coloring,
That the most careless eye is caught and charmed.
The cranesbill lifts its slight and graceful head,
And the blue lupine makes the sand-hill gay.
Go to the meadow, gather there, with care,
The frailest and the loveliest of the flowers,
The orchis tribe, — the arethusa, rich
In purple, half-transparent, and a breath
As sweetly spicy as the myrtle leaf, —
Or the pogonia, modestly concealed,
With hanging head, amid the blue-eyed grass,
Spreading a perfume fitting to its grace, —
Or calopogon, boastful of its wealth
Of purple beauty, holding perfume cheap.

Nor is the hand of the great Architect concealed,
When ripening forest-leaves display
The glories of October, — joyous, yet
With chastened gladness; seeming to recall,
Amid the glorious present, saddened thoughts
Of Summer past, and Winter drawing nigh.
But not to all. For they whose task is done,
Or who are toiling on with manful hearts
To do their Father's will, drink in the flood
Of beauty from October scenery,
Without the draught of bitter memories.

How glows anew the Summer in the leaf
Of hickory and birch ; beforehand glow
The fires of Winter in the scarlet oak
And crimson tupelo. The maple bough
Bedecks itself in every brilliant hue.
Beside it, in a hyacinthine dress
Of sombre beauty, stands the rich-robed ash.
No tree, no plant, but now assumes a hue
In harmony with the Autumnal scene :
The bramble that we scorned in June, we now
Can only look on with admiring eyes ;
The very sorrel that we warred against
Is now a picture that delights our soul.

And when the leafy honors of the wood
Have fallen 'neath the approaching Winter's breath,
Come to the meads again, to gather now
The blue-fringed gentian, flower of hope and faith.
If ever flower declared our Maker's love,
Or bade us hope in life's quick changing year,
This is the plant, that 'mid the piercing frosts,
And under bleak November's dreary sky,
Lifts thus its matchless azure to rebuke
Desponding hearts, and gladden every eye.

Yet why should Winter thus be feared by man ?
For He that feeds the merry chickadee,
And guards the squirrel's safely hoarded corn,
Keeps man beneath his ever-watchful eye,
And shows his children in the wintry storm
The tokens of his presence and his love.
When the Northeaster howls along our coast,
And blinding snow-flakes fill the thickened air,
The short-lived day gives place to tedious night,
While double darkness clothes the earth and sky,
We lift a prayer for sea-tost mariners,
And a new gush of gratitude wells up
For all the comforts of New England home.
Returning day at length unveils the scene ;
The storm is hushed, the gently-falling flakes,
Descending from a thin dissolving cloud,
Are clothing tree and shrub in whitest garb.

The sun breaks forth ; the dazzled eye in vain
Attempts to gaze upon the glorious earth :
Too beautiful, too fair for mortal sight.

Thus in each season of the changing year,
Unchanging Love displays its boundless wealth,
In varied beauty, full-toned harmony,
And works of power and wisdom infinite.

H. T.

SPIRITUAL UNCONCERN DUE TO UNWORTHY VIEWS OF CHRIST.

OF late, we have often heard the question discussed, both from the pulpit and in the private circle of friends, Why is it, that, with all the institutions and means of religious instruction and growth among us, so little *apparent* influence is produced in the common thoughts, feelings, and habits of the general mind? Why is it that things of sense and earth and time, to most minds, are so much more important, tangible, and real, than those of the immortal nature, of heaven and eternity? Why is it that so little interest is manifested among the young in the great truths of religion; that the feeling of attachment to the outward forms of religious service is so cold and slight; and that, during that very season of life when the soul most needs divine support and guidance, the feelings of self-reliance and self-confidence are so strong and prevalent?

Waiving the more general discussion of these questions, we would refer at present to a single state of thought and feeling, which seems to us to have a most important influence, especially during the period of the formation of the character; that season when the soul has outgrown, as it were, the implicit faith of childhood; when, to the earnest and questioning mind, truth can no longer be received upon human authority alone, but when the whole foundation and fabric of faith must be examined, and questions from all the deeper experiences of the soul and of life arise, and wait their due response; either to be thrust aside by the all-

engrossing pressure of outward engagements, plans, and pleasures, until the soul is lost in utter indifference and negligence, or to be boldly and patiently met, confronted, and answered, until the spirit rests upon the only sure anchor and foundation of a heavenly trust and hope.

We refer to that state of feeling, more prevalent perhaps than many imagine, in which the soul is considered all-sufficient to itself, which looks to Christ simply as a moral guide and teacher, as the Messiah of the past, but in which its close and necessary relation to him, as a divine and all-sufficient *Saviour*, as the one only Mediator and Redeemer, is wholly ignored, in fact if not in confession.

That this state of feeling is not confined to the young, that it exists even among those who are themselves teachers of others, we are fully aware. Indeed, not long since, in conversing of a recent publication, with a friend of mature years, of a strong and vigorous mind, yet perhaps somewhat wanting in those gentler graces of character that seem to us to flow alone from direct communion with Christ, the following remarks were made: "I cannot agree with nor understand such views as are there advanced. I can look directly to God; but I cannot see the purpose of dwelling so much upon Christ, nor of our need of him as a *Saviour*. Indeed, I never could understand the necessity of a mediator, of a third being coming between the soul and God. I feel, that, if I repent, God will forgive me: why, then, dwell with so much emphasis upon the life and death of Christ? Why look to him as more than a pure and holy being, a perfect example for man? Why regard his spiritual presence as more valuable or real than that of any departed friend?"

We suggested, in reply, the *Saviour's* own words: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Lo, I am with you always."

Yet do not such words as these, uttered in quiet and familiar conversation, evince a state of feeling which many are unwilling to acknowledge even to themselves? In our intercourse, too, with the young, with those who are just entering upon manhood and womanhood, both in the more private circle of home-relations, and in the intimacy of the sabbath-school, we have often been

painfully conscious how few, comparatively, possess any feeling of *personal* attachment, love, and gratitude to Christ, as their Saviour. There may be an intellectual knowledge of him, as God's chosen Messiah, derived from reading or education; but there is the want of a *heart-faith*, of a power that is real and living, of that vital force that can alone infuse life and warmth and zeal into so many of our churches now cold and dead. There is a want, too, of a living faith in the peculiar influences of the Holy Spirit, as derived *through* Christ, and dependent upon him as the ever-present Mediator. There may be a vague, general belief in the agency and influence of the divine Spirit, but not that quickening, sustaining, life-giving faith, through which the apostle speaks of being renewed, sanctified, and saved. Nay, in many minds, does it consist of any thing more than the soothing influences often derived from the contemplation of some beautiful scene in nature, or some master-work of art; from the calmness of the early morning, or the richer glories of the evening hour; dependent perchance upon the tranquil state of the nerves, or the quietness and success of the outward life? Is there, in fine, among many, especially among the young, any *real meaning* attached to those words, so full of power, "being *baptized with the Holy Spirit*, being *filled, renewed* by the Spirit;" and again, in the Saviour's words, "When the Comforter is come, whom *I* will send unto you *from* the Father;" and again, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, *because* that Jesus was not yet glorified"? Are not these *mere* words to many, vague and indefinite, possessing no spiritual force or efficacy?

That such a state of feeling is peculiar to the Unitarian denomination, we will not attempt to affirm; but that the existing faith, in many of its bearings and influences, is not sufficient and satisfying to inquiring and thoughtful minds, we know. "For, among those of earnest and reverent mood, there is a pause and an expectation, as if they heard a divine voice, just becoming articulate and audible, coming, not out of the old creeds, but out of the divine word, and out of the most interior consciousness of men, and prophesying of the things that are yet to be." In the infinite counsels of God, ours may be an age of transition, a passing from the barren formulas of faith, to the deeper spiritual realities of the soul. It is for us to deal with the facts, as they lie before us in the human consciousness and life.

Whence, then, arises this want of love to Christ, of interest in him as a *personal* Saviour? Why so little attachment to his church, and so little zeal in his work? Why is not the *young* heart given to him, in its early freshness and strength? Why so vague, indefinite a faith in the agency and influence of the Holy Spirit?

We complain of and deplore the result; but does not the evil lie deeper than many imagine, even in the child's earliest education, in those years when impressions are the strongest, and the affections the warmest and most vital, and when too often the young spirit is left to itself to gain its first religious impressions at mere hazard, from any chance seed that may be sown in the open soil? How often, too, even in the Christian household, is mere *general* religious instruction and influence imparted, and no direct parental efforts made to become acquainted with the peculiar wants, workings, trials, and questionings of the child's heart! And where there is any natural diffidence or reserve, especially in speaking of the deeper cravings and wants of the spirit, this only increases and strengthens as years pass on, until the hour of anxious self-questioning arises, when happy for the spirit if it find some Christian friend or teacher, in whose experience it can confide, and receive the help and guidance and sympathy it needs!

Then, too, can we not trace much of this coldness and indifference with regard to spiritual realities to the direct instructions imparted in our sabbath-schools? Is Christ there presented by many teachers to the child as his individual Saviour, and the Saviour of his childhood? Is he taught to feel that his only sure support in life, his only hope of heaven, depends upon God *through Christ*? Is he led to feel that the Saviour is ever present with him, sympathizing in his joys and trials, watching his progress, strengthening each better endeavor, interested in every little conquest and every true effort? Is he taught to pray through Christ for the divine blessing, receiving each spiritual gift through him as the one Mediator, looking to him as his final Judge, as the reconciler of the soul to God? In fine, is the image of Jesus so blended with the instructions and impressions received, that it becomes, even in childhood, a reality to the soul?

Such, we fear, is not the instruction given by many; for how can the soul impart a living knowledge of him who is the very

manifestation of the Father, unless it possess a divine life within itself; unless it has experienced its own deep need of a Saviour, and felt the powerful influence of the cross?

This intellectual, self-reliant faith, this belief in Christ as a holy teacher alone, as the Messiah of the past, may be sufficient to some minds; but it serves not the soul in the hour of deep self-questioning, when the surging waves of memory and conscience rise in their gigantic force, and the holiness of God, and his perfect law, stand a vivid reality before the soul, disclosing all its secret and hidden depths; it serves not in those silent watches of the night-season, or in those hours of physical prostration, when the darkened chamber, the hushed whisper, and the gentle foot-step leave the soul to its own self-communings, and the thought arises in its solemn power, —

"Thou must go forth alone, my soul!

Thou must go forth alone,

To other scenes, to other worlds,

That mortal hath not known.

Alone must thou go forth, my soul,

To meet thy God above!"

It serves not in the hour of bereavement, when the lifeless form, the hushed voice, the closed eye, alone remain to us, and the heavy sense of desolation presses upon the spirit, which no mere human sympathy can remove; nay, it serves not amid the *daily* duties and toils of life, the cares, anxieties, and perplexities, the joys and griefs of each passing hour, when the soul needs a more than human helper to sustain its composure, to preserve its rectitude, to quench the rising passion, to impart peace.

Are we told that Christ came to introduce and establish a new system of religion, and that through his perfect moral teachings alone the human mind is to develop and educate itself? Are we taught that a faithful, conscientious performance of duty is all that God or the gospel requires; and that such a life brings its own reward, here and hereafter? Point us, we would reply, to any one heart, that, in this way *alone*, has found true strength or the deepest peace, and we will concede our own views. No! a living Saviour does the soul need; a sense of the personal sympathy, the ever-quickening influence, of a *present* Christ, to feel even *now* the thrilling touch of the Master's hand, and, like the disciple of old, trustingly to repose on his breast.

And this deeper communion of the soul, this living faith, can come only through the deeper experiences of the inward life, through the holy ministries of silence and solitude and self-recollection.

Go not from one religious assembly to another, from church to church, as if in these outward services alone were to be found the needed life of the soul. Seek not vainly to drown the anxious self-questioning, the yearning desire, in excitement and business and pleasure, nor even in the mere faithful performance of duty, at the best so imperfect; for these cannot bring peace. But let the earnest prayer go forth from the very depths of the soul, —

“Lead me, O Spirit! to the Son,
To taste and feel what he hath done;
To lay me low before the cross,
And reckon all besides as dross;
To think and feel and act and move,
And love as thou wouldst have me love.”

Oh! were those who have the care and guidance of the young spirit in any degree aware of the deep impressions made in early childhood; of the difficulty of building up, as it were, this living, realizing faith in after-years, when it has not been interwoven in the very fabric of the child's heart; and of the struggles through which the spirit must pass, ere it feels its utter and entire dependence upon Christ, its need of a personal union with him, and of salvation and peace through a reconciling cross, — we believe that many would pause ere taking upon themselves the sacred responsibilities of teacher or guide, and first ask in deep, self-scrutiny, Have I a living faith in Christ? Do I feel my personal relationship to him? Do I so love the Saviour, through a consciousness of what he has done for my own soul, as to speak in sincerity to the young spirit of that divine love, and to strive to lead it in early life to the fold of the Redeemer? Have I a practical faith in the quickening, sustaining, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit? and is it my daily prayer that my whole soul may be baptized with its divine power?

Enough, and more than enough, have we had of mere intellectual truths, of the outward forms of godliness, of will-worship and self-reliance and proud self-confidence. Give us, we would earnestly ask, give us a deeper and more living faith. Tell us no longer of the dignity of human nature, for self-knowledge utters

its cry of inward want and failure and destitution; tell us no longer of the innate capacities of the soul, and its self-development, for vain mockeries are they to the soul in its hours of deepest need; tell us not of the goodness of God as revealed in the beautiful harmony of the outward universe alone, as if this were an all-sufficient anchor to the spirit, — for there are moments when the cloud within casts its dark shadow over the fairest scenes and the brightest skies, and faint and uncertain is nature's response to the earnest questionings of the spirit.

But let our churches and our schools be characterized by a renewed life, by a quickened fervor of spirit, by a practical faith in the power of prayer, by a conscious union with the ever-living Redeemer, by a realizing faith in the sustaining and quickening influences of the Spirit.

And, above all, "let the disciple who seeks the renewal of *himself* learn his relations to a *personal* Saviour; not merely the Christ of history, who set an example to men two thousand years ago, but the Mediator of the ever-present hour," through whom alone comes to the waiting soul the promise of the Father, even the baptism of the Holy Spirit. H. M.

MY NEPHEW.

A FAIR and gentle boy was playing
Near the open household door;
Summer's latest sunbeam straying
Gold-brown hair and forehead o'er;
While his rarest
Smile, and fairest,
And his bluest, sweetest eyes
Wore the signet of the skies.

Those eyes so lately dimmed by weeping;
That tender bosom heaved with sighs;
Griefs unwonted vigils keeping,
While his gentlest brother lies
Faintly sighing,
Meekly dying, —
Holiest calm, serenest grace
Sealing soft his troubled face.

But, 'tis over ! greenly waving
Trees bend o'er a little grave
Near, the murmuring waters laving
Pass in music, — wave on wave, —
While a holy
Trust, and lowly,
Fills *their* hearts who stay to weep
O'er the loved one there asleep.

Yet a deep and quiet sadness
Oft will shadow Willie's eyes,
Chasing all his childish gladness ;
While for him who lowly lies
Doth each morrow
Bring fresh sorrow
To the mother's heart, which still
Bows to meet her Father's will.

Sometimes near his mother stealing,
Or on his loving father's knee,
Every tender thought revealing,
Willie softly asks, if he
May that mild
And gentle child
Ever see enrobed in brightness,
And with wings of angel-whiteness.

And now to-day, while he is playing
Near the open household door,
Summer's latest sunbeam straying
Fair brown hair and temples o'er,
Earnest gazes
Oft he raises,
Filled with innocence and love,
To the home of blue above.

But ah ! with joy his eyes are beaming,
When floating downward soft and slow
He beholds it, — 'tis no dreaming, —
A lovely feather white as snow.
Then what pleasure
This fair treasure
In glowing haste and joy to bear
To mother dearest, sitting there !

List, and hear him sweetly saying,
 "Mother, see! to you I bring
 This feather soft, from heaven straying,
 Lost from Walter's angel-wing."

I think his glorious
 Form passed o'er us,
 Love and peace in those fair eyes
 Earthward glancing from the skies.

Ah! sweet Willie, thou hast lightened,
 With this pure thought, thy mother's care;
 Tender joy her face has brightened,
 While she takes thy treasure fair, —
 Snowy witness
 Of thy fitness
 Ever more to dwell above,
 In a fairer world of love.

E.

NOTE. — Little Walter, the child who died, was not two years old; Willie about four.

THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT AND THE CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPIST; OR, BUDGET AND HOPPER.

NO DEPARTMENT of literature is becoming more instructive than biography. It is a treasure-house of rich materials for the future historian. What, indeed, is history itself but a great mosaic, into which are wrought the varied hues of personal life and effort? But the humbler office of biography is still more valuable, in that it becomes an incentive to virtue, and provokes to the attainment of excellence. As a moral power, it is of great worth. The portrait of a good man, and the delineation of virtue as represented in action, will always tell. Life is more eloquent than speech. In addition to all this, biography also enlarges our conceptions, and gives scope and breadth of mental vision. He who reads of foremost men and women with a reflective discrimination will not lack in facts to teach of the almost infinite variety of forms in which character branches forth. Every one of whom we read has

an individuality which makes him unlike every other. Some will have much in common; yet the points of contact and fusion, so to speak, make up only a small part of their personality. In broad survey of the biographies in our libraries, what marked contrasts meet the eye! There is the man of ideas, so quiet and unobtrusive in his outgoings in the world that he is unheeded amid its noisy strifes; he may be a John Foster preaching at empty pews; yet in the mean time assimilating the facts of observation and nature to his meditative intellect until he works out, in the silent processes of thought, results which become a part of our permanent literature. By his side is placed the record of a Whitefield, a man of glowing fervid speech and extraordinary dramatic power, who, by the exercise of an inborn eloquence, empties the pocket of a Franklin, and touches the electric cords of the heart even as that philosopher drew sparks from the clouds. Next comes the sketch of the "Successful Merchant," — a Budget, who, with the gift of an original aptitude for trade, is found bargaining with his boyish playmates; yet whose love of thrift was mellowed by a poetic heart, and guided by a conviction of Christian obligation. And now, fresh from the press, appears the portrait of the quaint, shrewd, persistent, hearty, and unceasing benefactor of the suffering and needy, Friend Hopper, whose sympathies for others knew no limit within human possibility. How varied are the characters and gifts of these men! When intelligently read, their biographies enlarge our charity, and enrich our conceptions of the variety and range of capacity and effort, which mark the life of man. He who stores his mind by a clear and appreciating gaze at the world's distinguished portraits will not be tempted to imitate. He will gain in comprehensiveness of thought, and be taught that the most enduring strength cometh from fidelity to one's own gifts and personality. By this he will also be enabled to grasp the noblest success of which he is capable. Any mind of original power will become enfeebled as soon as it falls to a servile imitation. Each must be loyal to its own individuality. Under no possible circumstances could a Budget become a Hopper, or a Hopper a Budget.

We have been led to this train of thought by reading in succession the diffuse but valuable sketch of "The Successful Merchant," Samuel Budget, by William Arthur; and the interesting and heartfelt delineation, by Mrs. Child, of that noble

specimen of Christian manhood, Isaac T. Hopper. The two have few traits of character in common, and their outward walks in many respects were as unlike as their native endowments. The one manifested his benevolence in the career of mercantile life, while the other made philanthropy his chief business. It would be an obvious onesidedness, and a marked perversion of truth, to exalt the one at the expense of the other. We shall be drawn to them more or less according to a corresponding sympathy with their pursuits and aims of life. But neither attraction nor repulsion should warp our judgments of their sincerity, because each walked in the path of duty opened before him. They represent two distinct types of character, — the Christian merchant and the Christian philanthropist.

The biography of Budget is more in the ordinary pursuits of men than that of Hopper, and for that very reason may be more effective to many readers. It is useful in the assurances it gives, that a successful business-career may be pursued without a compromise of principle, or disloyalty to religion. In the constitution of his mind, he was possessed of rare combinations, and the growth of his character presents points of striking interest. Born with the genius for trade, he early gave indication of his inherent instincts. The love of traffic was wrought into the very fibres of his life, and yet with this there was mingled a fondness for poetry. Watts was his early study; and the first expenditure of the savings from his boyish traffic was for a copy of Wesley's hymns, which he treasured in his memory and affections. His intense love of a bargain, had it not been counteracted by other strong tendencies, would have made him sordid. But his heart was alive to benevolence, and his soul was steeped in the spirit of a devout piety. Before he began active life, he struggled in the choice whether he should be a missionary or a merchant. This reveals the two strong currents of desire within; they did not run in opposite directions, but were blended together. The conviction of his own unfitness for the former, and the claims which his family had on him for a support, led him to choose the latter. But, though he became a merchant, he never yielded up his mind to an all-absorbing care and effort, so as to let go his allegiance to his early faith and religious sentiments. A commendable incident is told of his early years. When he was about to be apprenticed, he gave his mother several pounds, being all the wealth he had

gained in boyish trade, and set out in the world without a penny, rich in a mother's blessing, and strengthened by the recollection of her piety. Success, however, crowned his labors; and from the humble beginning of selling an old horse-shoe, which he had picked up in the road, he became the head of one of the most extensive commercial houses in the West of England. As he advanced in life, religion grew in his heart with the increase of his wealth; and he is a bright example, illustrating to the world an honest business guided and ennobled by the sentiments of piety. He was prompt and scrupulously correct in the fulfilment of his engagements, careful and exact in his truthfulness, rigid and impartial in his justice, and judicious and ready in his benevolence. He did not regard those whom he employed as machines to be worked to the utmost, simply with a view to his own profit; but as men whose happiness and best welfare were to be looked after. Under the same roof where was heard the busy hum of labor, the thought of God was cherished, and the shrine of holy worship was visited to consecrate the toil of every day. The ledger and the Bible, the altar and the desk, each had its place under the same roof. Besides these general provisions, his faithful self-examinations, as recorded, show that his religion was not ostentatious. In private he searched his Bible with a scrutiny as keen as that which he gave to his account-book, and passed from the six days among stocks and price-currents, to refresh his mind on the seventh by communion with "Thomas à Kempis," "Hervey's Meditations," and the Book of books. Engaged in an extensive business, he found time to extend a care, and to give aid to efforts, for the improvement of the community in which he lived; was a generous donor to the religious denomination of which he was an active and devout member (the Methodist); and journeyed with a hand open to the cry of charity. But notwithstanding, when the last hours drew near, he was impressed with the conviction that he was an unprofitable servant; and, after all, what did he but his duty? For this he will be blessed by God; and let those who read his biography, and contrast his character and deeds with their own selfish lives, be animated to improvement, and kindle in their hearts a spirit of more moral earnestness, and sacred devotion to an enlightened and elevated religion.

But how unlike this, in many respects, was the life of Hopper!

Not only do they differ in the original constitution of their characters, but also in the outward circumstances through which they were expressed. Hopper's mind naturally was more vigorous, and its range of subjects more powerful, comprehensive, and varied. Had his nature been less noble, and his spirit less Christ-like and more akin to other men around him, he would have made himself felt in some of the great forms of activity. His Napoleon-like sagacity and skill in managing men; his point and directness in seizing hold of and presenting a subject, combined with his humor, persistency, and strength of will, would have given him a commanding influence as a soldier or politician. But, happily for the world, his qualities both of mind and heart were baptized into a religious faith which was loftier than the prevailing conventional standards. The world is now in no especial need of great generals to illustrate the glory of war, or of statesmen to excite their fellows to enter the paths of political life. The page of history gleams with the devotion of the one, and is lighted up with records of the other. The voice of eulogy is fulsome in their praises; wealth and intellect do them homage. The pages of one of our most popular monthlies are extravagant, not to say *morally* false, in their representations of one whose greatness cannot find an approval in the teachings of Christ, — wherever else it may be found. In view of these influences, which meet the young, and tend to poison their moral life, it is no extravagance to assert that the world needs the life and character of Isaac T. Hopper. Commercial and political life needs it. Our popular literature needs it, and the pulpit needs it. And it is refreshing, amid so much that is positively false and vitiating prevailing in respect to the idea of a great man, and so much that is hard and selfish all around, to hear a voice speaking to us with a faith tuned to a more heavenly gospel than our hearts receive. It is well for freedom, humanity, and religion. Whatever judgments men may form of the character of certain acts recorded in this biography, all must yield their respect, love, and approval of the motives that were hidden in his heart. And as long as we can have such illustrations of true Christian heroism and devotion, the memory of goodness will not die out of the world. For this reason Mrs. Child's book is doubly welcome. The highest praise we can give her, and that which will be most acceptable to her noble and generous heart,

will be a reproduction of its spirit in our own characters. Let, then, this book be read by all. And let even those who do not sympathize with the mode in which Friend Hopper sometimes manifests his philanthropy show their disapprobation by choosing still nobler forms for its expression; but let him who is without the sin of omission cast the first stone.

Having said thus much of these two, let our thoughts now drift into the current of more general reflections. What a positive privilege is the power of living a good life in its varied forms of thought and action! This view of the subject, however, is not the common one. Men oftener speak of the obligations which those confer who are distinguished by the exercise of virtue and the Christian graces. Especially is this true of benevolence, a quality of character which from its nature includes the idea of some benefit or aid conferred upon another; and it is true that he who strews his pathway with the sweet and kindly charities does bestow blessings upon others, and place the recipient under obligation of gratitude. Let the good which flows from the exercise of kindly affection and generous beneficence be fully recognized; let us bring to such the offering of our holiest sympathy and most hearty approval. Yet, with this admission, it cannot be denied that the world more frequently sounds the praises of the good man, — recounts his munificent charities, or the manifestations of benevolence in humble daily life, as if he was conferring a favor, than as if enjoying a holy privilege. This shows that the noble precept, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," has not yet seized a vital hold of the common judgment. Christ has most certainly enlightened our moral vision, and given a new and more elevated idea of benevolence. His disciples in theory, and partially in fact, have recognized the claims of the weak, the enslaved, the needy, and the erring, for their aid; but how slow is the thought getting hold of us, that to do good, to scatter charities, to dry the tear of sorrow, to still the harsh cry of remorse, to assuage the bleeding wounds of grief, to watch the bed of the sick, and smooth the pillow of the dying, — to speak words of cheer and hope to the degraded and sinful, to aid the emancipation of the slave, and hasten the coming of the acceptable year of the Lord, is one of our noblest privileges! The mass of men do not esteem the practice of benevolence in their individual relations as a great boon. So, as soon as the

record of a noble life is thrown out among them, they strive to outvie each other in their praises, and fall to work estimating the obligations the world is under to render such an one homage. If he belongs to our sect or party, we herald his praises all the more. Is there not a spirit of pride lurking under all this? It was said of one of our best merchants, who has recently departed, that when a case of benevolence was presented to him, and commended itself to his approval, he gave his aid with thanks to the solicitor for his bounty, that an opportunity for benevolence was thus afforded. This corresponds to the expression of a friend, who, in reading the deeds of Hopper, exclaimed with spontaneous and heartfelt enthusiasm, "What a *privilege* thus to bless and save the degraded, needy, and outcast!" But benevolence does not attain to its highest phase, until it passes beyond the region of calculation of its rewards, and flows from the promptings of true Christian love. In Christ we discern its fullest and most perfect manifestation. In his life every act was but the gushing forth of mercy, which welled up in the fountains of his divine and all-embracing affection. It was his meat to do his Father's will.

But to speak of the privilege of exercising a kindly and beneficent spirit will not avail as an argument with all men. Indeed, it should never be urged as a motive. It is spoken of in this connection as a consequence, and not a prompting force; for benevolence dispensed with the hope of reward is not a genuine act. It may do the object upon whom it is conferred a signal good, but cannot enrich the heart of the donor with the highest fruition of charity. In making, then, an appeal to consciousness, we fail to make a great many believe in the joy which proceeds from active benevolence, because it is a stranger to their experience. The truly benevolent man knows that it is a privilege to be able to do good. He finds in it an abundant reward; and his heart, in its goings forth of mercy, is cheered by glimpses of heaven. To speak to him of the joy which proceeds from the exercise of beneficence, is to affirm that whereof he knows; but such an appeal to the selfish would bound from the heart as the surging waves from the rocky cliff. The joy of benevolence follows the great law of spiritual life. The blessedness of religion can only be known through a personal experience. The love of God, for example, is not to be learned from Natural Theology, or the

Christian Scriptures, only so far as these awaken the sentiments of devout love within. Without this as an interpreter, all the language which describes this emotion is as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." So is it with any right or holy feeling. Isaac Hopper *knew* the peace of a sunny, kindly heart; but not so with many a hard, cold, and selfish man, whom he daily jostled in the streets of Philadelphia or New York. No argument, addressed to their consciousness, can have force until they have interpreted the truth by their personal experience.

And this thought suggests another inquiry, — Do not moral and religious teachers sometimes err in saying there is no satisfaction in the indulgence of passion? or at least, when stated in this general form, is there not a lack of discrimination? When viewed from a Christian's experience, there are no pleasurable feelings associated with wrong indulgence: the agony of remorse, the pains of disease, and the bitter consciousness which follow transgression, so much outweigh the momentary enjoyment of sin. But it is not always that this aspect of the question is really discerned, either by the young or the confirmed transgressor. Every one with ordinary forethought ought to estimate the legitimate and inevitable consequences which follow a wicked course, and this should deter one from wrong indulgences. But all this does not ignore the fact, that a kind of pleasure immediately attends the gratification of wicked passions. This is the experience of the drunkard, the gambler, and miser: call it, if you will, a gross form of enjoyment, — and doubtless it is very base, — still this does not change the fact; and if the victim by frequent indulgence has incapacitated himself for experiencing a higher kind of pleasure, he becomes more and more incredulous of any such. A supremely selfish man is sceptical even of the existence of a truly generous motive, as a principle of action. The miser, who really takes a satisfaction in his hoarded wealth, cannot conceive of the intense delight which follows the exercise of charity. A Shylock revels in his gains, but would sneer at Mrs. Fry. Every dollar which goes from his hand awakens a feeling of pain, and he measures others by his own experience; and it is not until we can open the fountains of his better feelings, and awaken a more benevolent spirit within, that he can understand the joys of charity, or truly listen to the cry of mercy. Hence, if any reader who may glance at these pages

should be sceptical of the truth before asserted, that the practice of benevolence should be esteemed a great privilege, we only ask him to sound his own inward life of thought and feeling, and see if their echo is not that of selfishness. Sure we are, that every kindly and generous heart will throb with delight, while reading the good deeds of Friend Hopper, and esteem it a blessed privilege, humble though it be and at a distance, to walk in the same heavenly pathway

S. W. B.

A LIVING CHRIST.

CHRIST's works, his sufferings, his resurrection, are themes of ordinary remark. We look back upon what he has done, without regarding what he is actually doing. We see the picture; but the acting, efficient being is unnoticed. The spirit of Jesus is the life of all the goodness in Christendom. But what is the meaning of these words? It is that his presence is the sun of the world. He lives, and we live also. We are saved by his life; by what he did, as well as by what he said; by his existence here, his pure ethereal being, as well as by his doctrines. Indeed, we cannot separate the teachings of Jesus from himself. They are only explained by his acts. His deeds are his thoughts. His history is the Gospel. Compare the narratives of the evangelists with the Koran. Compare them with Plato or Seneca. How little do we learn of Mahomet or Socrates from their precepts! But Jesus, anointing the eyes of the blind, writing upon the ground, and touching the bier, are only illustrations of his teachings. He himself wrote nothing: he lived, and his doctrines came into being. He had no system; but, by separate conversations, he conveyed his instructions to the sick and to the well, to the rich and to the poor, to the sinner and to the penitent. He talked by the well, in the house, the garden, by the way. No such conversation had before been heard. He is a personal manifestation of the truths he revealed. He is a revelation of truth. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" is a glorious reality. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you,

do ye even so to them," is embodied on the cross. Indeed, the very use of the words Gethsemane, Olivet, Calvary, shows that deeds are the revelation; just as Christ is a synonyme for Christianity, and the cross for the love of Jesus.

It is needless to enlarge upon the power of such a living manifestation of truth to redeem the world. All know that abstract precepts avail little beside concrete examples, — that love is taught by affection brooding over the child, and not by words alone. So the visible form of the Son of God, walking, conversing with men, practising with them self-denial, courage, meekness, firmness, hope, love, teaches these virtues as nothing else can. We see them alive; virtue becomes a man; holiness, the word, is made flesh.

Another thought is that our Teacher unites heaven with earth. He shows us the Father. He presents to us the peace and joy of celestial spirits. He introduces us into their company. He brings man into affinity with God and the beatified. Earth never before had such a visitant, nor the human family such a friend. A new sun shone forth, and its beams have penetrated the darkest corners. Not only has a messenger from heaven brought to man the message of his Maker, but the spirit of the heaven-sent has never left the world. It has diffused itself far and wide. It is active and operating wherever the gospel is preached. It lives in every true follower of Jesus. It is manifest in every project of good. Paul understood this when he said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." He knew that the Spirit which spread forth its dove-like wings at the baptism had ever since hovered over, and was ready to take up its abode with man.

The thought that has been attempted to be presented in this paper may more readily be apprehended by attending to some of its practical applications.

A living Christ should be held forth to the eyes of men. They should not read of one who came from heaven to leave precepts and doctrines, but who is entirely separate from the world at present. They should not look on the Messiah as having appeared eighteen hundred years ago, and now is afar off; but as one who is immortal, and is destined to rule over more and more of the hearts of the human family. The Saviour should be brought near. The fact that heaven has communed

with earth should not alone be taught, but the further truth that the angels are ascending and descending on the sons of men through the instrumentality of Jesus. Christ is born, Christ is risen, should be verities now as of old. We should see him when any of his lineaments appear. We should revere him in every Christian act.

The Saviour of the world is not a dead Christ, nor Christ on the cross or in the garden; but the living, breathing spirit as it appeared in Palestine, throughout his whole ministry. The Comforter to the apostles, by enlarging and elevating their views of the Messiah, is the Comforter of all who will give him a welcome. "I am with you alway" should be believed, and acted upon. Stephen looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. The same heavenly vision will be present whenever the eye of faith is turned upward.

The image and the crucifix have done something toward creating a conception of the living Christ; but there is a spiritual presence which will do more than any emblem.

Puritan and Unitarian have been slow to acknowledge it. They have contented themselves with going back into bygone centuries, and viewing the Christ of Judea. They have separated his teachings from himself, and contemplated him as a Seneca or Socrates empowered to work miracles, and to answer questions important to be answered. It is time to bring again from the dead, in such, the beautiful proportions of Jesus; to gather together the extolled saints which are now crumbling in the four quarters of the globe, and, taking whatever there is Christian in each, bring into being those who may be changed, by the living Christ, into the same image, and advance from glory to glory. Christ is to be formed in us. How are we to live again his life, if we do not show forth his spirit as a letter written by his hand? It would be a glorious life that would revive the Saviour, — bring him again on earth as an example. But is a Christian to stop short of this? Is he to be satisfied with copying a copy? But how can this be, without a living Saviour? Abstractions will not form it. Gazing at one who lived years ago, but who is now afar off in the realms of space, will not enable one to eat the flesh of the Son of man, or to drink his blood. We must feel assured that he is with us, living to make intercession for us.

Again, in order to produce the most good, clergymen should preach Christ. They should portray his character; describe, as far as may be, the emotions that filled his mind at a particular juncture; present pictures of the scenes through which he passed during his ministry; and by thus bringing before the imagination a portraiture of Jesus, — his dispositions, his interior life, — incite a desire to attain clearer and more exalted conceptions of him, until by contemplation the mind assimilates with his, and becomes one in spirit with him and with God.

If men would appreciate the life of the Saviour, they should strive to be like him. But he is not viewed as a whole. We catch only glimpses at particular times, or a thick mist envelops him, and hides him from our sight. The study of such a character as that of Jesus would increase the faith of pastor and people. His words would be living truths, and all his teachings would be seen to be perfectly practical. He would be brought near to the heart and life; the reflection of his glory would be manifest, and the kingdom of God be established within.

We are to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus: he is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him. But is this something to be attained apart from our Saviour? Can we be Christ-like, without understanding, as clearly as our faculties will permit, the spirit of Jesus? The living Saviour must be present, his sentiments must rise up to the mind, to give correct notions of the ever-changing scenes of the drama of which we are actors. We must be aware that he is with us, and walk abroad among our fellows, our hearts burning within us under a consciousness of his presence. We must commune with him, and grow more like him as a child grows like his beloved parent; until we feel lost without his company, and tremble for our safety if he be absent. The living spirit will be more than words or sentiments: action, divine action, will prove the union of man with the Son of God.

A further suggestion connected with the foregoing is, that, to interpret our Lord's teachings, we must be of his spirit. Dr. Channing observes, "We never know a great character until something congenial to it has grown up within ourselves." This is more true respecting Jesus' sayings than of any other teacher, because his personal manifestation explained his meaning. The sermon on the mount cannot be fully understood by a worldly mind, still less our Lord's conversations with his disciples. The

spirit of Jesus alone can rightly interpret his doctrines. Verbal criticism, and a knowledge of antiquities and of old commentators, are poor aids without the spirit that pervades the words. As well might one form an idea of Laura Bridgman's intelligence from reading a description of the signs she makes to her teacher. How often have the poor and unlettered disclosed a meaning to Jesus' words, which scholars have failed to discover! How important seem many passages which experience has forced upon our attention, that once were little regarded! It is only by being of the same mind with him who came to make us kings and priests unto God, that we can comprehend his mission, and the way in which he fulfilled it.

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that the heavenly energy, the divine word, was made flesh, that all flesh should receive of it; that mortal man should be a son of God, and the weak, passion-tossed child of Adam, a partaker of the divine nature.

Where is Christ unless he be formed in us? How can he be announced, unless his spirit is in our midst, and his celestial presence gladdens the hearts of his followers?

MORNING AND EVENING.

A DIALOGUE.

MORNING.

HAIL! gentle daughter of the night,
 Dewy Evening! sister bright!
 Long and peaceful be thy reign!
 Hail to all thy starry train,
 The pale moonbeams that whisper low
 The hopes and fears of long-ago;
 Thy sable mantle bright with gems,
 The queenly Night's rich diadems;
 The love-sick breezes' gentle tale,
 The sad, sweet song of nightingale,
 Æolus' wild and mournful wail,—
 By all these tokens, Evening, hail!

EVENING.

Sister of the rosy cheek,
Maiden of the dew-bright eye,
See the gloom the valley seek,
See the mist before thee fly!

See the light thy footsteps greet,
See the ever-joyful day,
Forward rush thy smiles to meet,
Where the merry sunbeams play.

All give greeting unto thee,
Beauteous goddess of the East:
Rest thee here; oh! rest with me,
While nymphs prepare Aurora's feast.

MORNING.

Since I've met thee here alone,
Many a weary day has flown;
Gentle sister, hast thou been
Sporting on the elfin green?

Have the fairies chosen thee
Queen of their wild revelry?
Or when shades of night drew on,
Hither didst thou fly, sweet one,

From Italia's sunny groves,
Where the traveller fondly roves?
Gazing on her sky's deep blue,
Has it charmed thee, Evening, too?

From Helvetia's mountain-home,
Sister Evening, didst thou come?
Didst thou tinge her highest peaks
With the roses of thy cheeks?

Or in Constance' silver lake,
Didst thou watch the morning break?
From Arabia didst thou come,
Have her deserts been thy home?

In Harmoria's quiet bay,
Didst thou dream the night away ?
Sweetest sister, tell me, pray,
Whither thou hast been since day ?

EVENING.

From the shadowy land of dream,
Where only rays of sunset gleam,
With my darkening mantle grey,
O'er all the world I took my way.

I wandered first where summer smiles
O'er coral grotts and ocean isles ;
Thence, gliding o'er the white sea-foam,
I gained the proud old city, Rome.

I gave its towers a darker hue,
Old Naples' bay a deeper blue ;
Then, casting back one fond look more,
I gained the classic Grecian shore.

Not long I stayed to revel there,
But on the Persian valleys fair,
And on the roses of Cashmere,
And on her lakes so cool and clear,

And o'er the northern mountains high,
And o'er the southern summer sky,
I cast the magic of my spell,
And bade them all a short farewell.

But whither, whither wert thou away,
Before the opening of the day ?
And what hast thou been doing, Morn ?
Waking the beauties of the dawn ;

Or wandering o'er the grassy lea,
Or roaming o'er the dark-blue sea ?
Where hast thou been, these bright spring hours ?
And what hast thou gathered, thorns or flowers ?

MORNING.

I came from the East,
The land of the blest ;
I basked in the smiles
Of Ionia's isles ;
I crimsoned the sands
Of Arabia's lands ;
I welcomed the day
In sunbright Cathay ;
I banished the night
From the " Island of light ;"
I wakened the flowers
In Sicily's bowers ;
I saw the sun smile
O'er the banks of the Nile ;
I saw the light break
Round Mœris' fair lake ;
I heard the birds sing
The praises of Spring,
And blessed their bright song
As I hurried along.
I heard the Moslem's call to prayer,
" Alla il Alla," fill the air ;
I saw the Persian prostrate fall,
Upon the sun I heard him call ;
I saw the Hindoo bow him down
Before his gods of wood and stone :
In these countries I have been,
And these wonders have I seen.

EVENING.

I laid the weary sun to rest,
And closed the portals of the West,
Till early dew.
I hushed the busy pulse of day,
And o'er the earth the mantle grey
Of twilight threw.
I closed the flowerets' tiny bells :
On mossy banks, in woodland dells,
They fell asleep.

I hushed the winds to whispers low,
As o'er the waves they come and go,
Of Ocean's deep.

I bade the birds their music cease ;
And to their nests, with notes of peace,
They took their way.
I bade the brooklet cease to flow
Or murmur to the greensward low,
Till break of day.

I summoned then the hosts of night :
With all his starry gems of light,
Orion came ;
While to the north, in chair of state,
Arose to mark the seaman's fate,
A queenly dame.

But brightest in the southern skies,
See heaven's own emblem now arise,
With gems of light ;
While to the north a circlet fair,
Close by the golden-flowing hair,
Now crowns the night.

Thus have I lulled the world to sleep,
While angels still their vigils keep
In heaven above.
Thus have I given the weary rest ;
While they, from regions of the blest,
Gave peace and love.

MORNING.

An envied mission thine, fair Eve,
To bid the mourner cease to grieve ;
To wrap the world in sweet repose,
The flowerets' tiny bells to close,

To call the tiréd laborer home,
To bid the traveller cease to roam,
To soothe the weary child to rest,
To banish care from every breast.

The evening's vesper sound is sweet,
Its mellow tones we love to greet;
The evening's sunset hues are fair,
Its sweet repose we long to share.

Who does not feel the sad, sweet power
Of this the golden evening hour?
Who does not love its tender light,
The marriage-bond of day and night?

EVENING.

Though a lovely task be mine,
Yet a holier one is thine;
For thine it is to wake the earth,
And call all nature into birth;
To deck the fields with opening flowers,
To tint with gold the summer bowers;
To bid the bird in rapture raise
His morning song of love and praise.
And thine to rouse the mind of man,
That he may labor, toil, and plan,—
May labor on this lower earth,
To fit him for a higher birth;
The rich reward for labor given,
A blest eternity in heaven.
Oh! though a lovely task be mine,
Still a holier one is thine.

MORNING.

Though I grieve to part with you,
Evening, we must bid adieu!
See, my chariot waits afar,
And my steeds impatient are!

Still are closed the golden gates,
Still the world in darkness waits!
See, the vapors of the night
Fly before the dawning light!

In the forest wakes the bird,
Now his matin may be heard;
See the floweret's tiny cup,
Haste to drink the dew-drops up!

See the sun, with hasty strides,
 Pace the giant-mountain's sides!
 All proclaim the coming day:
 Both are ruined if I stay.

EVENING.

Yes, farewell! 'tis time we part,
 Dearest sister of my heart;
 Time for thee to mount thy car,
 Time for me to flit afar
 To the portals of the West,
 There till close of day to rest.
 But, when my task again is o'er,
 I'll hie me back to thee once more;
 Beneath the midnight sky we'll meet,
 And spend the hours in converse sweet;
 Or, with the fairies on the lawn,
 We'll gaily trip till early dawn.
 But now, my sister, on the sky,
 See all thy form reflected lie;
 And hark! faint sounds the distant bell;
 Then, dearest sister, fare thee well.

EARTH MADE HOLY BY THE LIGHT OF HEAVEN.

TRULY a strait and narrow way is this that we are called to tread through this probationary state. On the one hand, to guard against that asceticism, which despises all earthly enjoyments and recreations, and looks on this fair world of ours only as a scene of temptation and trial; on the other, to avoid all entanglement among the things of time and sense, and, while we pluck the wayside flowers, to see that we do not wander from nor linger in the heavenward path, — to guard against one or the other of these dangers, according as the temperament and the experience of life may be, constitutes the paramount trial of many, who would be Christians in heart.

Our heavenly Father, who made our earthly home so rich in beauty, — so full of sources of gratification for the eye, the mind,

and the heart, — could not have intended that we should despise or lightly esteem the gifts which he has lavished upon us. It were base ingratitude to shut our eyes upon the glories of nature, to overlook the abundant supplies for the wants of the intellectual powers; or to steel the heart against the many objects which plead for a share in our sweetest and holiest affections. It must have been intended that we should love all these things deeply, fervently. We wrong our better nature when we render ourselves insensible to any of these blessings; when we forget the bright and beautiful, in dwelling on what is sad and apparently evil in the dispensations of Providence. This is not the frame of mind that becomes a Christian. In some cases, indeed, from constitutional gloominess of temperament, from physical suffering, or from often-repeated disappointments and sorrows, there is a tendency to sadness, that even a large measure of Christian faith may not wholly counteract; but in general the greatest sufferers are not the most gloomy and querulous. The suffering saint presents a glorious example of serenity and cheerfulness to the luxurious but discontented worldling. It is not Stoicism which enables him thus to endure. It is rather a sanctified Epicureanism, that finds joy and beauty where all would be sorrow and deformity to the eye that looked for worldly pleasure only. He is not insensible to suffering; but bodily anguish and bereaved affection are transmuted from evils into blessings by the faith that traces them directly to the hand of Infinite Love.

The glory of the outward world is not dimmed, but rather irradiated by the light that shines from the heavenly glory beyond. We do not magnify the worth of the celestial by looking contemptuously on the terrestrial. The same Lord is the Maker of both, and is best honored by the due appreciation of each. One is, in its place, as perfect as the other. It is not by despising temporal things that we learn rightly to estimate the things that are eternal. The temporal life becomes sacred, and almost awful, when regarded as the morning hour of eternity, which, if lost, is never regained through that eternal day.

The asceticism, which feels bound to look with disapproval on all earthly gratifications, is perhaps the natural reaction of a soul shocked by the worldliness of the mass of men. Certainly it is the less evil of the two. Yet alas! it not only deprives its subject of much innocent and healthful enjoyment, but it makes

religion repulsive to many. It is to be lamented that real piety should ever assume so unlovely a form.

The heart that is keenly alive to the charms of this present life has need, surely, of constant vigilance. It is surrounded by a thousand snares. To many the seductions of life present far greater perils than its sterner discipline. They can endure its privations and afflictions with meek resignation, with an uplifting of the soul to God; but the day of prosperity puts their Christian principles to a severer test. Though they are not to be driven from the narrow way by the violence of an open enemy, they suffer themselves to be lulled to sleep by syren voices, when they should be on the alert against an ambushed foe. The "dear delights" of earth, even those beautiful affections which perhaps most ally them to Him who is in his nature essentially love, constitute the greatest trial of their virtue. They are tempted to pervert some of his best gifts into idols, and to sacrifice to them, it may be unconsciously, that strict and almost stern adherence to duty, which Christ requires of those who would be his faithful followers. The frowns or the scorn of the world at large they could boldly meet in the cause of what they believe to be truth and righteousness; but the averted look of a friend sometimes seems a trial too great for them to endure in prospect, and, in their fear of losing the earthly, they forget that they are displeasing that better, that heavenly Friend, to whom they owe all things. By so doing, they degrade friendship itself, which is pure and genuine only when it is such that it may be carried unchanged into the heavenly state. They allow their love for a fellow-creature to stand as a barrier between their souls and the great Creator, when it should have drawn them nearer to him in gratitude for the priceless gift of a friend. It is not that they love the earthly friend too fondly. Those who form their friendships for eternity need not fear to love from the depths of their heart. It is no perishing thing to which they cling. We would say to them, Love not the child less, but the Father more; and see that the affection for the human friend be free from all taint of earth, from all self-seeking and vanity. Let it be such as one disembodied spirit may feel for another. This love has within itself the elements of immortality. It is superior to the vicissitudes of life. Accustoming itself to look for its full fruition into the distant future, it can endure temporary separation from the

object of its regard. Even should alienation seem to be the result of the faithful discharge of duty, it can wait trustfully, though not without sadness, for the time when the purity of its motives shall be vindicated, and the apparently divided hearts shall be made one again in the world of clearer revelations. It will still weep at the grave of hopes buried for this life; but it will find a balm for its sorrows in the hope of a glorious reunion, and of the eternal years beyond the tomb.

There can be no worship more beautiful and holy than that of the happy heart. There can be none more acceptable to God. In the hour of darkness, we almost instinctively turn to Him who is the only source of true light; but in our seasons of joy we are apt to content ourselves with the reflected light of earth, and to forget the Giver through the very profusion and beauty of his gifts. We should not be satisfied with giving to our best Friend the poor remnant of a heart tired of earth, and broken by affliction. Let us give to him the freshness of our happiest hours! Let us learn to see him in all the beauty that surrounds us; to acknowledge him in all the joys of life! Let all our friendships be sanctified by the thought of him as the universal Father, and by the hope of an eternity to be passed together in his presence. Let it be our constant aim "so to pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal!"

M. W.

NEW BOOKS.

Christian Liturgy for the Use of the Church. Boston: Crosby, Nichols, & Co. 1853. — Although the name of no editor or compiler is attached to this volume, it is understood to come from the hand of Rev. Dr. Hedge, of Providence; a gentleman as well qualified for the work, by taste and scholarship, as any among us. It is one of many signs that a demand for liturgical forms in worship is springing up among modern Congregationalists. This tendency is by no means confined to what are called Liberal Christians. Whether it indicates a mere restless discontent with existing usages, or a definite and intelligent conviction that such forms would aid devotion, is perhaps, as yet, hardly clear. A Puritan would not hesitate to say it proves a decline in the vitality and spirituality of our piety. However the want originates, Dr. Hedge contributes a valuable help towards satisfying it. His

selections from the ancient prayers of the church are made with judgment and care. His plan admits of much variation and liberty, from the differing preferences of individuals, and leaves room for spontaneous services; yet it offers an outline of a rubric which may secure a good degree of uniformity, and includes many noble expressions of the common faith and hope. All believers ought to be familiar with the grand conceptions and majestic language, musical and solemn as a celestial chant, of the communion service. This Eucharistic section alone would justify the publication of the book. There is a venerable charm, and even a kind of sanctity, in the captions from the Roman Missal, retained at the heads of the extracts from the Psalter. Our own impression is, that the Liturgy which will finally win the widest acceptance will be that which preserves most faithfully both the order and very largely the contents of the Book of Common Prayer; thus handing down substantially, from the joy and suffering, trust and penitence, of ages, the endeared and precious associations that have grown about the words, and have been transmitted through believing generations. With the theology of Dr. Hedge's collection, no branch of the church ought to be dissatisfied; and the book is so compact, that it may be bound up with the sheets of a hymn-book.

God with Men; or, Footprints of Providential Leaders. By Rev. SAMUEL OSGOOD. Boston: Crosby, Nichols, & Co. New York: C. S. Francis & Co. 1853. — In the order of publication this is a sequel, in the order of subjects an introduction, to the excellent "Studies in Christian Biography," from the same industrious and conscientious author. It celebrates the leading characters of the Old and New Testaments, from Abraham to John, and regards them as the embodiments of great religious ideas, monotheistic and Christian. Mr. Osgood has a wise way of blending generalization with personal narrative. He here discusses subjects in which all the minds, and especially the young minds, of our day, ought to be concerned. He has written in an animated, graphic, and pointed style. There is nothing loose nor plethoric in his pages. The work would make a good text-book for a Bible-class. We wonder if the author weighed the objections to using the name of the Supreme in an outside title, to be inevitably ejaculated, screamed, and coupled with the denominations of money in book-stores, auctions, catalogues, and trade-sales.

Hints for the Household; or, Family Counsellor. By Rev. WILLIAM M. THAYER. Boston: John P. Jewett & Co. — In addition to a religious treatment of the numerous domestic relations, Mr. Thayer considers the family as the basis of social insti-

tutions, and introduces such connected topics as "The Family Sabbath," "Family Reading," "The Philosophy of Character," &c., all of which he discusses seriously and sensibly.

New Bible Dictionary, by HOWARD MALCOLM, D.D. Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 1853. — A work with this title needs no explanation, and Dr. Malcolm's reputation needs no compliments. Of course, the definitions of the names of persons, places, and products, are likely to be less disputed than those of the terms of philosophy and theology. We will only add that the matter is here brought into a compact and proper shape, and that the pages are illustrated with engravings.

History of Church Music in America. By N. D. GOULD. Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 1853. — Such a treatise as this was wanted. Opening with a general historical sketch of the art, it goes on to trace, in a manner less scientific than popular, its progress in this country, giving many curious and interesting accounts of schools, styles, eminent teachers, academies, conventions, concerts, instruments, with some regard to the principles of expression, and musical rules. Of course the author could not hope to escape all contradiction and censure, knowing, as he must, the sensitiveness of the musical profession.

Uncle Sam's Palace; or, The Reigning King. By EMMA WELLMONT. Illustrated by Billings. Boston: B. B. Mussey & Co. 1853. — It will not be disclosing the whole secret of the authorship of this popular temperance story, if we mention that it came from the same pen that signs "H. S. E." in our own pages. Of course, it is not for us to praise it as we should be glad to praise it. We suspect, however, that the public have taken the need of commendation out of our hands. A tale presenting so many life-like characters and natural reflections of every day, home-bred experience, will be sure not to want readers. It is well the writer's tact and talent have been devoted to so worthy a cause.

The Mysterious Parchment; or, The Satanic License. By Rev. JOEL WAKEMAN. Boston: J. P. Jewett & Co. 1853. — Another piece of domestic fiction, with the same general design as the one last noticed, but devoted more especially to a recommendation of what is called the "Maine Law." It is to be hoped these appeals to the imagination and the heart will do more to arrest intoxication than any statute. But if they clothe the statute in new power and sanctions, we are of those who believe they will render a double and a noble service.

Christian Progress. By JOHN ANGELL JAMES. Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 1853. — Mr. Angell's writings have had a great circu-

lation, both in his own country and in America. He is plain, practical, earnest, scriptural, and devout. In this little work, corresponding to Dr. Ware's on the same subject, and, like that following one on the beginnings of the Christian life, he handles, in the several divisions, the subject of Religious Progress, as to its necessity, nature, means, mistakes, hindrances, motives, and encouragements.

Arthur Elleslie ; or, The Brave Boy. Boston : Geo. C. Rand, and W. J. Reynolds & Co. 1853. — It is the intention of the publisher to bring out a taking and improving series of Stories for Children, under the general title of "Uncle Toby's Library." We bespeak for him the candid judgment of young and old. The author's *nom de plume* is Francis Forrester, Esq. The first number seems to us successful.

The Quarterly Journal of the American Unitarian Association. Boston : Crosby, Nichols, & Co. Oct., 1853. No. I. — Besides a Quarterly Report of the doings of the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, the indefatigable Secretary seems to intend to make the "Journal" a collection of original and selected articles, touching the history, spirit, and prospects of liberal Christianity, — for gratuitous distribution. He will also publish his correspondence with friends in different parts of the country. So that the work promises to be a series of longer, more varied and interesting tracts. The first number speaks well for the project.

The "Proceedings of the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends," — fifth month, 1853," suggest many good things. One not wholly good is the likelihood that this body will undervalue religion in zeal for social reform, thus bereaving social reform of its only permanent and sure support.

An "Appeal to Husbands and Wives in Favor of Female Physicians," sold by Redding & Co., would gain more converts, and perhaps fewer readers, if its representations of the existing practice were less highly or less darkly colored. Medical practice by females ought, undoubtedly, to be extended much beyond its present limits ; and all immodest doctors ought to be at once exposed and driven from the profession, by public opinion or the courts of law. All that this pamphlet pretends we do not believe.

Though at a late date, we must acknowledge the receipt of three Sermons from brethren, — one from Rev. SAMUEL LONGFELLOW on "The Word Preached," the production of a spiritually-minded scholar, — and the other two, direct and effective within the scope they prescribe, by Rev. C. M. TAGGART, now of Charleston, S. C.